2006 Local Accomplishments

AID FOR TOWNS IN THE 31st SENATE DISTRICT

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 31st state Senate District is ensuring Bristol, Harwinton, Plainville and Plymouth receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state:

| Total Education Grants | \$55,349,524 | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Town Aid Road Fund (TAR) | \$643,742 | This funding is an increase of \$1,166,500 over last year's total |
| Mashantucket Pequot/Mohegan Grants | \$1,202,702 | |
| Local Capital Improvements (LoCIP) | \$723,014 | |
| Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) | \$984,925 | |
| Extra Property Tax Relief for 2006 | \$785,596 | |
| Totals | \$59,689,503 | |

Terryville Water Wheel

I'm pleased to report that \$350,000 has been approved for the historic water wheel and generator in Terryville, a section of Plymouth. The Eli Terry, Jr. water wheel, built in the early 1840s, is a 20-foot diameter, rack-and-pinion, breast-type wheel which used to supply power to the industrial buildings of its time. The money will help with the restoration as well as the demolition of blighted property leading to the beautification of the water wheel.



RSVP Program

Together with the Bristol Community Organization, I worked hard to successfully secure funds for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). The program enables seniors in the 31st District to volunteer in an array of non-profit settings. RSVP helps recruit seniors, ages 55 and above, to work in non-profit settings in the communities of Bristol, Burlington, Farmington, Plainville and Plymouth. Placements through RSVP include mentors in school systems, tutors, hospital volunteers and in local museums.

Bristol Historical Society

The state will help the Bristol Historical Society make much needed renovations to its home on Summer Street. Designed by Bristol native Theodore Peck, the impressive building was built in 1890 and purchased in 2001 to serve as the permanent home for the historical society. I'm proud to have played a part in securing \$75,000 in funding to support this worthy cause.

Campaign Finance Reform and Ethics

We continued to strengthen our ethics laws in response to unprecedented corruption that occurred in our state. Legislation this year prohibits a governor's spouse from receiving honoraria and bans a governor from lobbying the state for at least one year after leaving office. We also continued to improve our strongest-in-the-nation campaign finance reform legislation by protecting the system's integrity in the event of a court challenge and further limiting political action committees (PACs).

Taking a Stand Against Underage Drinking

House parties pose a significant risk to our young people who consume alcohol on private property. The General Assembly passed a new law this session that makes it a crime to knowingly allow underage drinking on private property or to do nothing to prevent such activity. This legislation also extends the law prohibiting the possession of alcohol by a minor on public property to all private property as well.

A Message to My Constituents



Dear Neighbors,

On May 3rd, the 2006 legislative session came to a close. Our state Constitution dictates the beginning and closing times for each legislative session, and this year was the shortest possible—only 85 days. In this short time, the General Assembly passed significant initiatives to make Connecticut a better place to work, live and educate our children. I have included some highlights of the session in this newsletter.

I am especially proud that a bipartisan budget was adopted that to provide tax relief for automobiles, real estate and businesses while returning money to cities and towns to help hold down local property taxes. This includes an increase—from \$400 to \$500—on the state property tax credit.

Please let me know if you have questions or concerns.

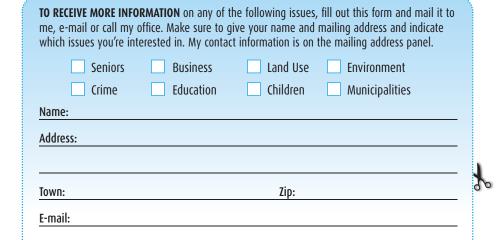
Sincerely,

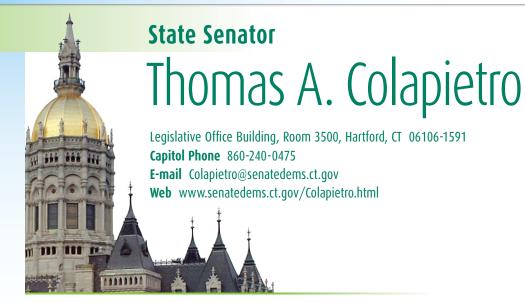
Thomas A. Colapietro
State Senator, 31st District

Stay Informed...

For the latest information on the issues affecting your district, please visit my Web site: www.senatedems.ct.gov/Colapietro.html



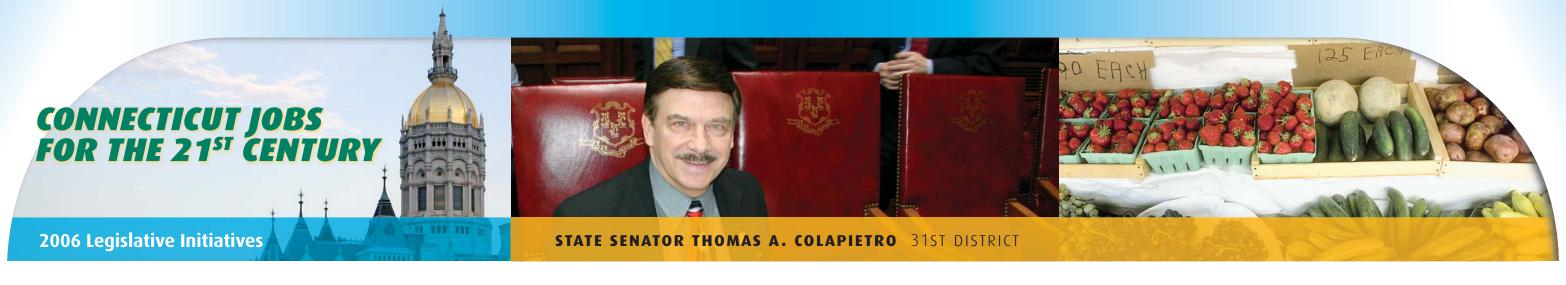




to represent
the 31st state
Senate District
which includes
the communities
of Bristol,
Harwinton,
Plainville and
Plymouth

I'm proud

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A recent study probably shocked the state with the information that since 1991, Connecticut has experienced no net job growth. My Senate Democratic colleagues and I initiated a comprehensive plan to address the need for job growth in order to steer our state toward a brighter future. Our legislative package invests in education, jobs, university/business partnerships, transportation improvements, and the promotion of promising fuel cell technologies that have been developed right here in our own backyard.

Highlights of our successful initiative include:

- Elimination of the Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment property tax to attract more manufacturing jobs to Connecticut, especially the cutting-edge, precision manufacturing that is critical to our future economy
- Tax incentives to attract movie companies to film their productions here in Connecticut
- Linking promising new businesses to the university expertise that can help bring innovative products to market
- A Center for Entrepreneurship that will assist promising technologies—including fuel cells—develop right here in our state
- More funding for incumbent worker training programs, provided by regional workforce development boards, to help workers learn new and valuable skills
- Creation of business incubators to help grow the small business ideas that will fuel our future economy and improve job creation across the state
- Development Research and Economic Assistance Matching (DREAM) grants that supplement and increase small businesses' access to federal research grants
- A Business Advocate's office to serve as a one-stop contact point for businesses to access government assistance and cut through red tape
- Encouraging more engineering and doctoral research graduates staying and working in Connecticut through a 'Scholar-to-Work' system which ensures that innovation and creativity will remain a hallmark of Connecticut's future in the growing world marketplace
- Partnerships between local schools and businesses to help more students master math and science as building blocks to careers in competitive fields
- Teacher 'externships' that help link the skills taught in classrooms to those sought by employers, and providing opportunities for students to participate in internship and jobshadow experiences that will help them build relevant job skills
- Asserting Connecticut's position as a global leader in the fuel cell industry by improving clean energy alternatives in ways that grow jobs in this highly skilled sector
- **Promoting nanotechnology**—an industry that works at the molecular level—to establish Connecticut as a leader in developing complex materials sold to businesses around the world

Working for Connecticut's Future



Recognizing **Our Veterans** The debt owed our

state's veterans can never be re-paid in full. During the 2006 session, the legislature continued

to recognize the service of our brave men and women by passing new laws aimed at repaying part of this debt. These new laws include exempting disability payments from determining eligibility for certain income based property tax exemptions for veterans, extending the same protections to state service members assigned to state duties as they would be entitled to on federal duty, and expanding the definition of veteran to include reservists and National Guardsmen.



Access to Imaging Services

Imaging services, such as MRIs and PET scans, are crucial in the diagnosis and proper treatment of certain diseases. However, some insurance companies have set copayments for these services so high that they are costprohibitive. A new law will set limits on the copayments that certain patients pay for these services, helping to ensure patients do not forgo these tests because of an inability to pay.

Healthy Food and Beverages in Schools

We listened to Connecticut's nutritionists, physicians and parents and fought to provide our students with healthier food and beverage choices. Senate Democrats led passage of landmark legislation that bans the sale of soda and other sugary drinks in schools. It also provides towns three times as much in school lunch aid from the state if they provide healthier choices for their students. This incentive will promote the better nutrition and healthier lifestyles our kids deserve.

Connecticut's Farms

Trumpeting our Connecticut-grown farm products is excellent publicity for our state. We passed legislation that requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a campaign, including television and radio advertisements, to promote the advantages of purchasing these products. In addition, we expanded the types of products that can be sold at farmers' markets. We also provided funding to UConn to expand its Integrated Pest Management program, which promotes pest control through safe and effective methods and is crucial for crop productivity and quality.

Tax Credits for Historic Structures

Our state has many older, historic structures that are now vacant and in desperate need of rehabilitation. We passed legislation that authorizes \$15 million per year in business tax credits for funds spent rehabilitating these properties for residential use. This type of incentive will help restore and beautify these buildings while providing housing and reinvestment to our communities.

Clean Cars

The increased concentration of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, including carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides, has the potential to negatively affect our climate. Since our vehicles emit these harmful gases, we passed legislation establishing a labeling program for new cars sold or leased for model years 2009 or later. The label will include a "greenhouse gas score" to help educate consumers on which vehicles are more environmentally sound and which have less detrimental impact.



Allowing Cash Discounts for Gasoline and Banning Zone Pricing

The Senate adopted what would have been a "first-in-the-nation" ban on gasoline zone pricing. The proposal prohibited gasoline refiners and producers from establishing price zones based on geography or other criteria. The legislation also allowed gasoline retailers to provide cash discounts to their customers, and required retailers to set prices based on the cost of gasoline in their possession and not on anticipated spikes in the market. Unfortunately, this bill did not become law.

Energy Efficiency

To help residents with energy costs, we passed legislation last October that exempted certain weatherization products—such as insulation, programmable thermostats, and energy-efficient furnaces and boilers—from the state sales tax. This session, we extended the exemption until June 30, 2007. We also passed legislation that requires certain

state construction projects to meet stricter energy and environmental standards. This will help save state taxpayers money while promoting energy efficiency.



With the help of an increasing budget surplus, we were able to make many improvements to our existing FY '07 budget. And importantly, we were able to pass this budget on time and with bipartisan support. We wisely used state resources to make significant investments in programs beneficial to the health, safety and education of Connecticut's residents. In addition, we are funding a cutting edge economic development program designed to create the kind of jobs needed to keep Connecticut vital and competitive in the 21st century.

We increased vital aid to cities and towns by \$60 million—an action necessary to help keep local property taxes down; deposited approximately \$350 million in the Rainy Day Fund; and fully funded the state Teachers' Retirement Fund in both FY '06 and '07 with \$246 million from the state surplus. Finally, one of our greatest achievements in this budget was to fight any efforts to repeal the current property tax credit on the state income tax. In fact, we successfully fought to increase the car and property tax credit from \$400 to \$500.